

REMARKS

Claims 44-54 are pending. Claims 44-54 are rejected.

Objection to the specification

The Examiner objects to the specification as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. Applicant believes the objection is moot in light of the amendment to the specification.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph

Claims 44-54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicant believes these rejections are moot in light of the amendment to the specification.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 44-46 and 53-54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,631,328 to Wang et al. ("Wang").

Claim 44 defines a method of coating an implantable medical device. The method comprising (1) adding a copolymer of an ethylene comonomer with **a carboxylic acid comonomer** to a solvent system to form a composition, (2) applying the composition to an implantable medical device, and (3) allowing the solvent system to evaporate.

Wang describes forming a composition of ionomers that can form a film (col. 6, lines 17-63). The composition can be formed of three monomers: (a) an alpha-olefin, (b)

an ester of alpha, beta-ethylenically-unsaturated carboxylic acid (see col. 2, lines 55 and 56), and (c) a metal salt of acrylic or methacrylic acid (col. 2, lines 55-59; col. 4, line 59 through col. 5, line 63).

Therefore, Wang does not describe forming a coating including a copolymer of an ethylene comonomer with a carboxylic acid comonomer. Esters of a carboxylic acid and metal salts of a carboxylic acid are totally different chemical entities from the carboxylic acid. In addition, esters of a carboxylic acid and metal salts of a carboxylic acid have totally different physical and mechanical properties than the carboxylic acid. For example, as an ordinary artisan would recognize, an ester of a carboxylic acid is more hydrophobic than the carboxylic acid. Conversely, a metal salt of the carboxylic acid is more hydrophilic than the carboxylic acid. A film formed of an ester of a carboxylic acid or a metal salt of a carboxylic acid would have totally different physical, mechanical, or drug release properties than a film formed of a carboxylic acid. A key aspect of the Wang reference is to use a combination of an ester and metal salt of a carboxylic acid monomers for forming a film which has low haze (col. 1, lines 13-19), which attests to the different film properties that different monomers in a polymer of the film can impart to the film.

In the Office Action mailed on February 12, 2007, the Examiner states that Wang reads on the claims because the two compounds mentioned in the claim are part of a copolymer (page 3, middle paragraph). Applicant respectfully fails to see the relevance of this statement. Applicant can certainly see that Wang describes a copolymer. However,

the copolymer described by Wang is entirely different from the copolymer defined by claim 44 (see the discussion above).

In sum, claim 44 is patentably allowable over Wang. Claims 45, 46, 53 and 54 depend from claim 44 and are patentably allowable over Wang for at least the same reason.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 47, 48, and 50-52 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Wang in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,087,412 to Chabreck et al. ("Chabreck").

Claims 47, 48 and 50-52 depend from claim 44, which is discussed above, and therefore require **a copolymer of an ethylene comonomer with a carboxylic acid comonomer, which is entirely different from the copolymer described by Wang.**

Chabreck describes a macromer that include a segmented copolymer **which is an amide** (col. 1, line 20 through col. 2, line 23). **Chabreck does not describe a copolymer of an ethylene comonomer with a carboxylic acid comonomer.** Therefore, Chabreck does not cure the deficiencies of Wang, which is discussed above. Therefore, claims 47, 48 and 50-52 are patentably allowable over Wang in view of Chabreck.

Claim 49 is rejected as being obvious over Wang in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,729,914 to Kliment et al. ("Kliment").

Claim 49 depends from claim 44, which is discussed above, and thus requires **a copolymer of an ethylene comonomer with a carboxylic acid comonomer, which is entirely different from the copolymer described by Wang.**

Kliment describes forming an N-vinylpyrrolidone copolymer that can include

ethylenic monomers such as hydroxylethyl methacrylate or hydroxylpropyl acrylate.

Hydroxylethyl methacrylate or hydroxylpropyl acrylate is an ester of methacrylate or acrylate, **which is not a carboxylic acid** (see the discussion of Wang, *supra*). Therefore, Kliment does not describe **a copolymer of an ethylene comonomer with a carboxylic acid comonomer** and thus does not cure the deficiency of Wang. Accordingly, claim 49 is patentably allowable over Wang in view of Kliment.

The undersigned authorizes the examiner to charge any fees that may be required or credit of any overpayment to be made to Deposit Account No. 07-1850.

CONCLUSIONS

Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of the claims are respectfully requested.

If the Examiner has any suggestions or amendments to the claims to place the claims in condition for allowance, applicant would prefer a telephone call to the under-

signed attorney for approval of an Examiner's amendment. If the Examiner has any

questions or concerns, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney at

(415) 393-9885.

Date: March 21, 2007
Squire, Sanders & Dempsey L.L.P.
One Maritime Plaza, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94111
Telephone (415) 393-9885
Facsimile (415) 393-9887

Respectfully submitted,



Zhaoyang Li, Ph.D., Esq.
Reg. No. 46,872